

To: Bussard, David[Bussard.David@epa.gov]; Bateson, Thomas[Bateson.Thomas@epa.gov]; Keshava, Nagalakshmi[Keshava.Nagu@epa.gov]
From: Birchfield, Norman
Sent: Fri 10/14/2016 6:48:42 PM
Subject: FYI: EPA postpones meeting on herbicide cancer risks

EPA postpones meeting on herbicide cancer risks

Marc Heller, E&E reporter

Published: Friday, October 14, 2016

A U.S. EPA science advisory panel will postpone a three-day meeting scheduled for next week on the potential cancer risks of the weed killer glyphosate, the agency said today.

EPA cited "recent changes in the availability of experts" to attend the meeting of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act Scientific Advisory Panel, which could shed light on conflicting claims about the farm chemical's health risk to humans.

The agency said the meeting would be rescheduled for later this year.

"Given the importance of epidemiology in the review of glyphosate's carcinogenic potential, the Agency believes that additional expertise in epidemiology will benefit the panel and allow for a more robust review of the data," EPA said in a statement.

In advance of the meeting, the agency has collected 246 public comments, including from CropLife America — a trade association for makers of farm chemicals — and Christopher Wild, director of the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer, which last year reported that glyphosate is "probably" carcinogenic.

EPA's own analyses have suggested glyphosate doesn't cause cancer, but the agency has said it wants to review more recent data in light of the IARC report.

CropLife America's senior vice president for government affairs, Janet Collins, said in comments submitted in August that EPA had no scientific basis for the review and should cancel the advisory panel meeting. In addition, she said, the IARC report was based in part on the views of scientists who already had a negative opinion of glyphosate and potential conflicts of interest.

"For over 40 years, the EPA — and all other regulatory and scientific agencies worldwide that have reviewed glyphosate — have concluded that glyphosate does not pose a cancer risk to humans," Collins said.

Wild of IARC responded in a letter, standing by his agency's objectivity.

Farmers and farm groups wrote to the agency in defense of glyphosate, a widely used herbicide often known by the brand name Roundup, sold by Monsanto Co. Other companies also make weed killers containing glyphosate.

"During glyphosate's nearly 30 years of use, it has been the subject of hundreds of toxicological and environmental studies," said the National Association of Wheat Growers in an Oct. 4 letter. "When applied

according to approved label directions and precautions, glyphosate poses no unreasonable risks to farmers, farm workers or the environment."

Norman Birchfield, Ph.D. / National Center for Environmental Assessment / U.S. Environmental Protection Agency / phone: (703) 347-0174